



No. 228

February, 2013

SPAWN

COMICS

DIGITAL
EDITION





PREVIOUSLY IN SPAWN

Jim Downing's long search into the mysteries of his past life came to an end, culminating in a showdown with longtime puppet master, Jason Wynn.

Content to let the past remain the past, Jim is determined to set a new course for his life. Though secrets still haunt him, there is hope in the darkness, as Jim seeks to control the power of the K7-Leetha and write his own destiny as the world's newest Hellspawn.



Jim Downing (Spawn) – A man whose past is shrouded in mystery, and connected intimately to the very fabric of the *Spawn* mythos, Jim is the world's newest Hellspawn... and so much more. Having spent years in a deep coma, Jim's main drive is piecing together the fragments of the man he was, in an effort to discover the man he truly is.



Marc Rosen – A would-be reporter-turned-media manager and confidant of Jim Downing, Marc views Jim as his ticket to a better life – though the price for that success may be far greater than Marc knows.



Sara Johnston – When Jim woke from his coma (issue #185), Sara was the first person to greet him on the other side of the darkness. A woman of strong faith, Sara's connection to Jim will test her in ways she could never imagine.



Clown – A demon with close ties to the legacy of the Hellspawn, Clown's goal of controlling Jim Downing has been jeopardized by recent events. But, ever the survivor, Clown seeks new avenues through which to manipulate his prize – Downing will not slip through his grasp so easily.



Susan Matthews – Susan is Marc Rosen's girlfriend and a woman with strong abandonment issues. Feeling neglected by Marc, Susan seduced Jim, only to be rejected, as Jim felt uncomfortable with the situation. Longing for attention, Susan has consistently had her advances ignored, as Marc's devotion has been focused on his new career.



Detective Sam Burke – Sam, and his partner Twitch, have long been embroiled in the deeper mysteries connected to the Hellspawn – first with Jim's predecessor, Al Simmons, and now with Jim. Most recently, Sam was hospitalized after a run-in with Clown that had him at death's door.

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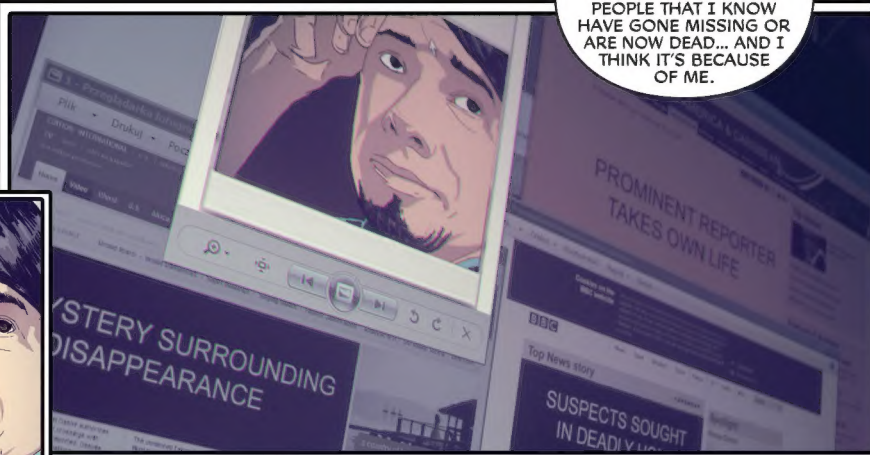
TODD McFARLANE
PRODUCTIONS
SPAWN.COM



HELLO,
MY NAME IS
MARC ROSEN... AND
I'M MAKING THIS
RECORDING WITH THE
HOPE THAT IF ANY-
THING **HAPPENS TO**
ME, SOMEONE WILL
LISTEN TO THIS
AND...

MORE THAN
ANYTHING... I
JUST HOPE THEY'LL
BELIEVE ME... AND
INVESTIGATE
DEEPER INTO WHAT
I BELIEVE IS A
MULTI-LAYERED
CONSPIRACY.

AND
WITHOUT
SOUNDING TOO
CRAZY-- I HAVE **NO IDEA**
WHO'S ORCHESTRATING
ANY OF IT. BUT SOME
PEOPLE THAT I KNOW
HAVE GONE MISSING OR
ARE NOW DEAD... AND I
THINK IT'S BECAUSE
OF ME.



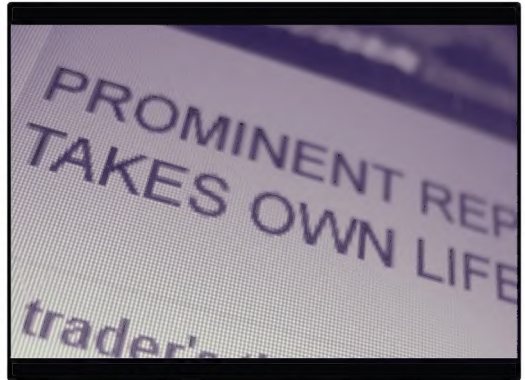
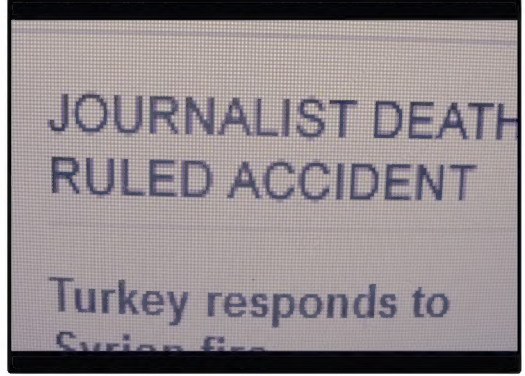
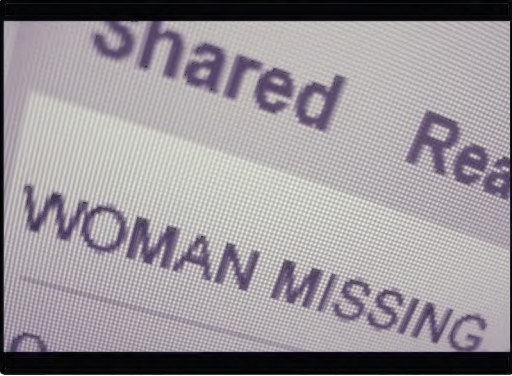
AND IF YOU
CHECK THE DATES--
EVERY ONE OF THEM
VANISHED OR DIED
DAYS AFTER I GAVE
THEM A PHOTO.



THIS
PHOTO!

THE MAN IN IT
IS JIM DOWNING, THE
GUY I NOW WORK FOR.
THE SAME GUY WHO'S BEEN
ALL OVER THE INTERNET AND
T.V.-- DOING SOME INCREDIBLE
THINGS THAT NO ONE CAN
EXPLAIN. THE WOMAN IS... I
DON'T KNOW! I HAVEN'T
A CLUE.

BUT
EVERY
JOURNALIST
WHO RECEIVED
THIS IMAGE...
IS GONE!

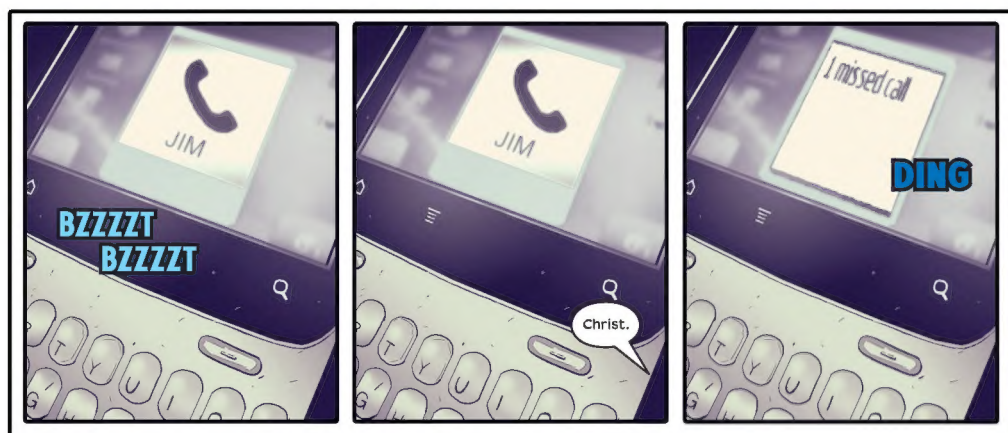




I'LL INCLUDE SCREEN GRABS OF ALL THE REPORTERS' CASES AND INCLUDE AS MUCH INFORMATION ABOUT THEM AS I CAN. BUT THE PEOPLE THAT DON'T WANT THIS PHOTO SEEN ARE CAPABLE OF DOING ANYTHING.

THAT'S WHAT'S SCARING ME SHITLESS. BECAUSE I DON'T WHO THEY ARE OR WHY THEY HAVEN'T COME AFTER ME YET. BUT SOME GOVERNMENT GUY SAID THAT...

BZZZZT



**BZZZZT
BZZZZT**

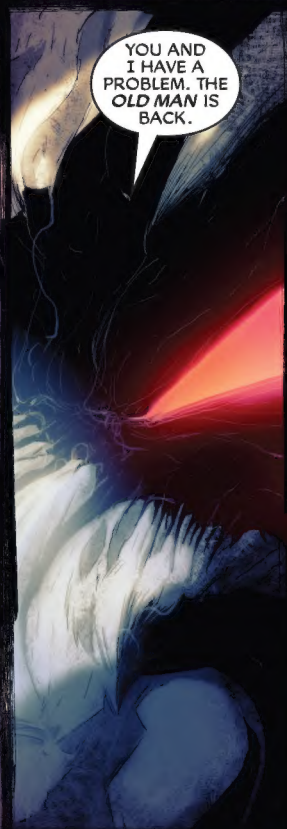
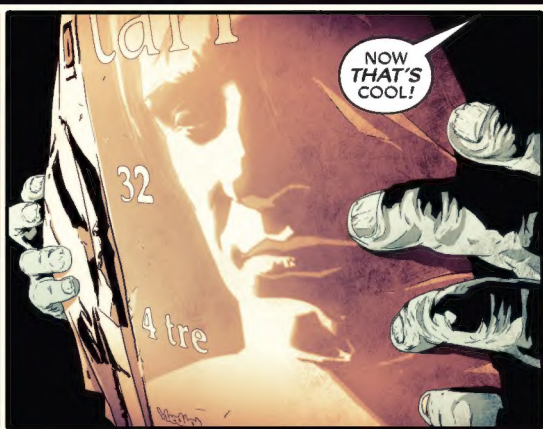
Christ.


DING



ONE OTHER THING... I DON'T KNOW HOW JIM FITS INTO ANY OF THIS-- AND TO TELL YOU THE TRUTH-- I'M TOO AFRAID TO ASK HIM.







WHY? I'VE NEVER HAD A PROBLEM WITH HIM. WE ALWAYS KNEW WHERE EACH OTHER STOOD. THOUGH I GOT THE FEELING COG WASN'T TOO FOND OF YOU.

ARE YOU DEAF?! I SAID **HE'S BACK!** THERE'S ONLY ONE WAY HE COULD DO THAT-- HE HAD TO **ABDICATE** HIS THRONE! NOW ASK YOURSELF... **WHY WOULD HE DO THAT** UNLESS HIS POWERS HAVE GROWN?! AND SINCE HE WAS A SPAWN HIMSELF ONCE-- WHO DO YOU THINK HAS THE INSIDE TRACK TO **CONVERT OUR SPAWN**?!




LIKE I SAID. HE'S NOT MY PROBLEM. AND DOWNING, IN CASE YOU HAVEN'T NOTICED, DOESN'T BELONG TO ANYONE YET.



SO WE'RE ALL COMPETITORS NOW?



YES.



THAT YOU THOUGHT OTHERWISE SHOWS HOW UNDISCIPLINED YOU STILL ARE.

THAT TRAIT WILL FAIL YOU EVENTUALLY.

YOU'RE RIGHT. I NEED TO BE MORE LIKE YOU SO I CAN HONE MY POWERS AND INFLUENCE.



THEN MAYBE... JUST MAYBE I CAN MAKE F*CKIN' KEY CHAINS SOME DAY TOO!



AND YOU ACTUALLY BELIEVE DOWNING IS CAPABLE OF DOING ALL THESE STUNTS I'VE BEEN WATCHING?



I DO. I'VE SEEN IT WITH MY OWN EYES.



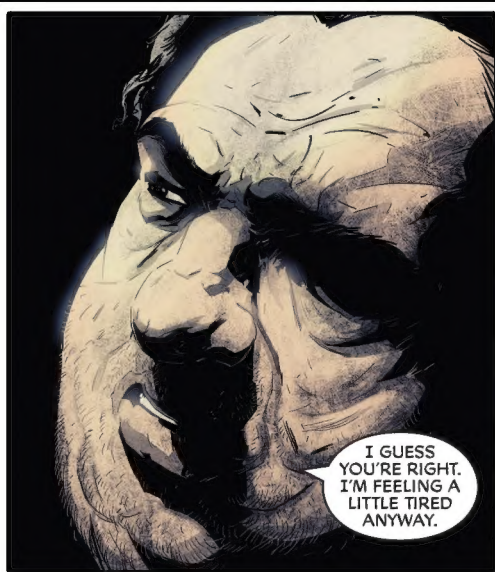
THE WHOLE TIME YOU WERE IN THE HOSPITAL,* DETECTIVE ROWAND AND I WERE TRYING TO FIGURE OUT WHO HE MIGHT BE. BUT NEITHER OF US FOUND MUCH. NOR HAS ANYONE ELSE IN THE WORLD FOR THAT MATTER.

SO HE JUST TOUCHES **CRIPPLES** AND **INVALIDS** THEN THEY'RE CURED?! NOW THAT'S ONE **HELLUVA** TALENT. TOO BAD YOU COULDN'T DO THAT, TWITCH-- COULD'VE ZAPPED ME AND GOTTEN ME OUT OF THAT HOSPITAL SOONER. THOUGH THE NURSES WERE OKAY LOOKING. THERE ANY MORE DISCS YOU NEED ME TO WATCH TONIGHT?

I HAVE SOME BACK AT THE OFFICE. I'LL BRING THEM BY TOMORROW. YOU DON'T HAVE TO GET CAUGHT UP ON EVERY ONE TONIGHT, ESPECIALLY SINCE THE DOCTORS SAID YOU NEEDED TO TAKE THINGS EASY FOR A WHILE.

YEAH...

*Since issue 199--Todd

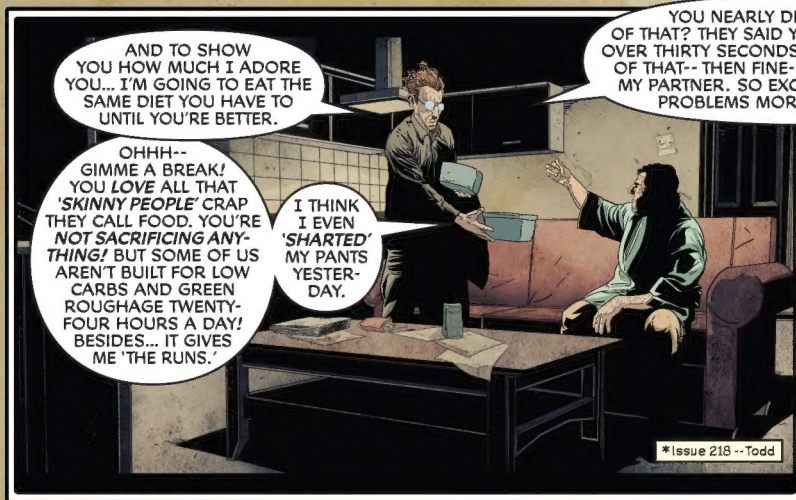


I GUESS YOU'RE RIGHT. I'M FEELING A LITTLE TIRED ANYWAY.



PROBABLY BECAUSE YOU HAVEN'T EATEN ALL DAY. I STOPPED BY THE CORNER STORE ON THE WAY UP AND GOT WHAT THE DOCTOR RECOMMENDED.

BUT I DON'T WANT TO HEAR YOUR COMPLAINTS.



AND TO SHOW YOU HOW MUCH I ADORE YOU... I'M GOING TO EAT THE SAME DIET YOU HAVE TO UNTIL YOU'RE BETTER.

OHHH-- GIMME A BREAK! YOU LOVE ALL THAT 'SKINNY PEOPLE' CRAP THEY CALL FOOD. YOU'RE NOT SACRIFICING ANYTHING! BUT SOME OF US AREN'T BUILT FOR LOW CARBS AND GREEN ROUGHAGE TWENTY-FOUR HOURS A DAY! BESIDES... IT GIVES ME 'THE RUNS.'

I THINK I EVEN 'SHARTED' MY PANTS YESTER-DAY.

YOU NEARLY DIED, SAM. YOU'RE AWARE OF THAT? THEY SAID YOU WERE *CLINICALLY DEAD* FOR OVER THIRTY SECONDS.* SO YOU WANT TO MAKE LIGHT OF THAT-- THEN FINE-- GO AHEAD. BUT I LIKE YOU AS MY PARTNER. SO EXCUSE ME IF I TAKE YOUR HEART PROBLEMS MORE SERIOUS THAN YOU DO.

*Issue 218 --Todd



C'MON, TWITCH. I WAS KIDDING.

YOU'RE SUCH A GIRL SOMETIMES.

I WAS JUST COMMENTING ON HAVING TO EAT ANOTHER OF THESE ASSWIPE SALADS. AND I...

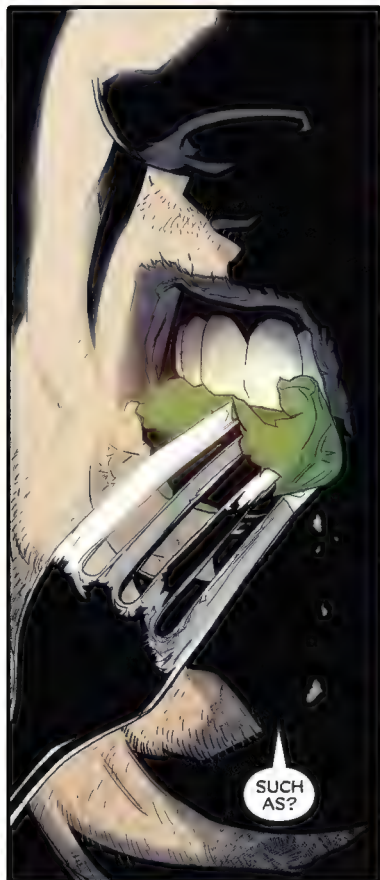
I LIKE BEING YOUR PARTNER TOO.

SO NOW THAT WE'VE GOTTEN THE 'BROMANCE' OUT OF THE WAY, WHAT ELSE DO I NEED TO KNOW ABOUT THIS DOWNING DUDE?



MOST OF WHAT WE KNOW IS IN THE FILES I BROUGHT-- READ THEM AT YOUR LEISURE. BUT THERE'S STILL A COUPLE THINGS THAT ARE BUGGING ME.





SUCH AS?



FOR STARTERS, I BELIEVE THE ATTEMPT ON YOUR LIFE AT THE HOSPITAL IS SOMEHOW CONNECTED TO DOWNING.*

AND BEFORE YOU ASK... YOU'RE THE ONLY ONE I'VE SAID THIS TO.

I BELIEVE DOWNING'S POWERS POSE A THREAT TO SOME. THE WAY THEY'RE ATTACKING HIM, I BELIEVE, IS BY ATTACKING THOSE CLOSE TO HIM.

*Issue 211--Todd

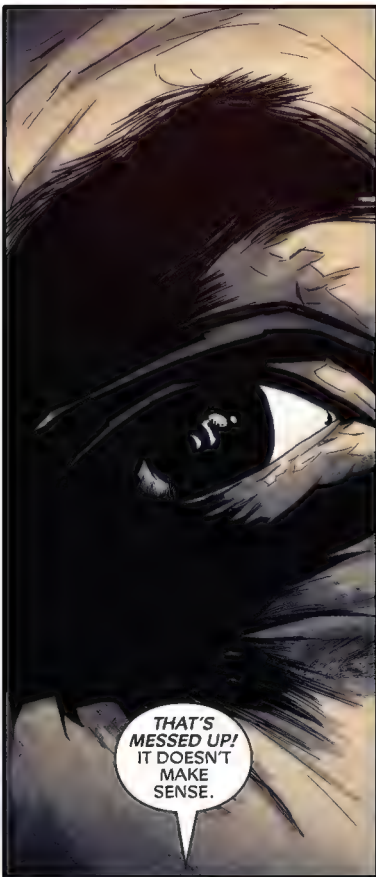


WHAT'RE YOU TALKING ABOUT?! I'VE NEVER MET THE GUY!



BUT I HAVE.

SO THE BEST WAY TO GET TO DOWNING MIGHT BE TO GET TO ME. AND THE BEST WAY TO GET TO ME IS THROUGH YOU. THAT'S HOW DEEP THIS ALL GOES. THEY DON'T CARE HOW MANY LAYERS THEY NEED TO GO THROUGH AS LONG AS IT LEADS BACK TO DOWNING.



THAT'S MESSED UP! IT DOESN'T MAKE SENSE.



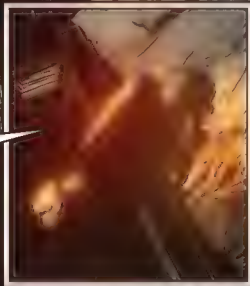
WELL... THIS SHOULD THRILL YOU THEN.



I'm so...
lost... so
confused.

Please..

Give me the
strength-- because
I don't know where
else to turn. You're
the only hope
I have left.



I know you
chose me to watch
over him-- and I've done
that with all my heart. I
just don't know why. Why
make me fall in love with
someone who doesn't...
feel the same way?

Can he be
changed?



"I know he wants
to... I just don't
trust that he will.

"I've lost
faith in him."



And because
you sent him to
me-- does that
mean I'm losing
my faith... In
you too?

Or is it
me? I
don't know
anymore.



God...
please...
please help
me.



I knew what
I was supposed
to do-- what to feel
when he was in his
coma. His spirit and
yours were so
very strong.

And I
needed that.
I needed both
of you in my
life...



"Because everyone close to me
had abandoned me-- and when
you sent him to me-- it was a gift
I wasn't worthy of receiving.


"But you blessed me with
a friend who listened to
all my fears. All my pain.

"It was
perfect."


Why?

Why did
You make
him wake
up?






And why
did you let
him take me
into the
dark?



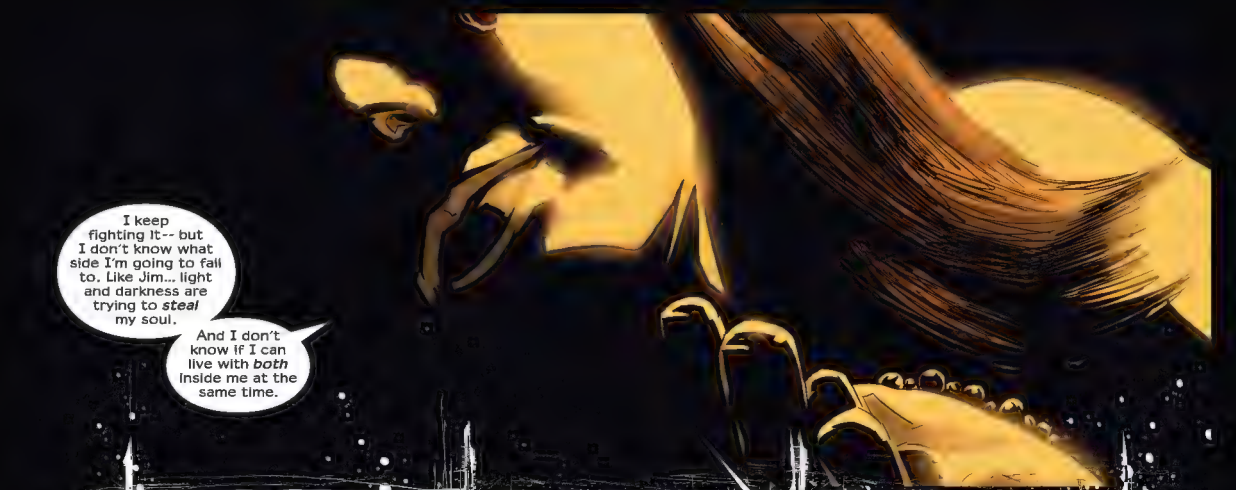
"Until then I loved him... with
every fiber in my body. But he
took me into the darkness... and
God help me... I haven't
stopped being scared since.

"I couldn't see
or hear anything.
But I felt it!"




It was all
around me.
Everywhere!

And now
I don't know who
to trust any-
more or why I'm
even feeling like
this.



I keep fighting it-- but I don't know what side I'm going to fall to. Like Jim... light and darkness are trying to *steal* my soul.

And I don't know if I can live with *both* inside me at the same time.



I'm not Jim. His actions show that he has so much love-- so much light. But he lives with darkness too. I can't do that. I'm not as strong as him.



Please, Lord... give me strength.





SARA.

MY
DEAR,
DEAR
SARA.

LOOK AT YOU,
SO TORTURED AND
TORMENTED. YOUR
FEMALE SPECIES CONTINUES
TO DISAPPOINT ME WITH YOUR
CONSTANT INSECURITIES AND
SELF-DOUBTS. YOU NEVER SEEM
SATISFIED... EVER. AND BECAUSE
OF THAT YOU MAKE PERFECT
TARGETS FOR GOD. HE'S
ALWAYS PREYING ON
YOUR MATERNAL
WEAKNESSES.

HE KNEW
WOMEN CRAVED
SOMETHING 'MORE.'
THAT'S WHY HE
CREATED YOU...

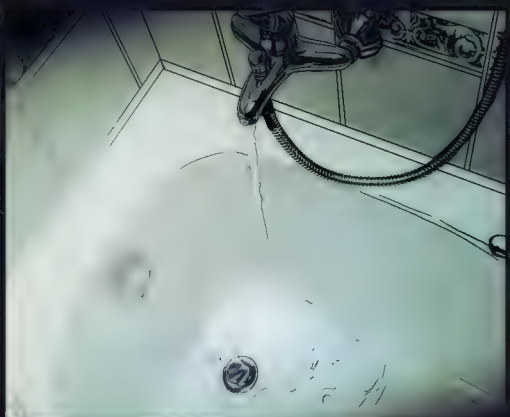
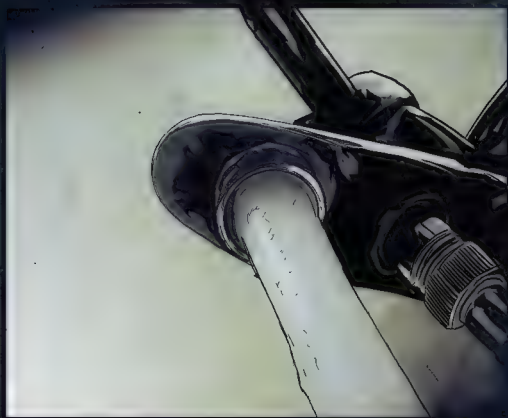
RELIGION.
IT WAS HIS
GREATEST
TRICK EVER.

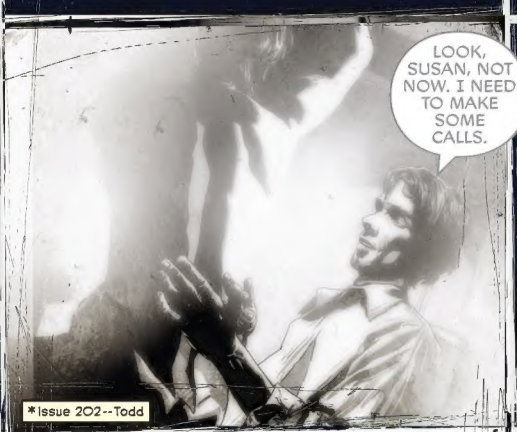


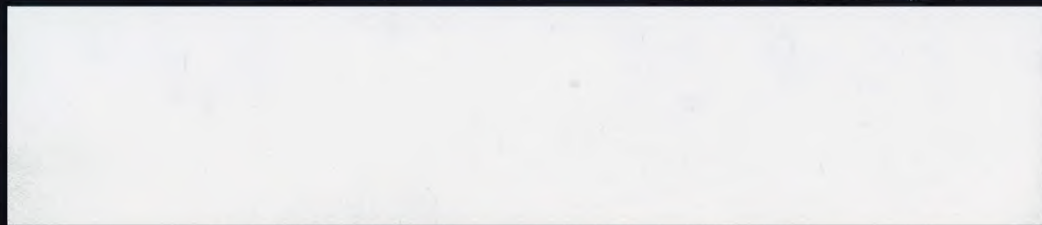
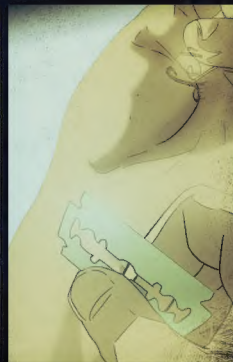
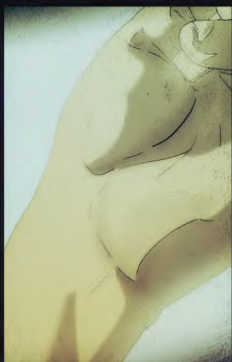
BUT IT
ALSO MEANT
YOU COULD BE
TARGETS FOR
HELL TOO.















Tyrant
Lizard
King

EMPIRE